IN THE CLAIMS

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please **CANCEL** claims 3, 12, 13 and 17.

Please **AMEND** claims 1-2, 4-11 and 14-16 as follows.

1. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A component management system comprising:

a storage unit storing hardware and firmware related ~~electronized~~electronic information components as a hardware and firmware component knowledge database, each ~~electronized~~hardware and firmware related electronic information component being ~~electronized~~electronic information generated during processes including ~~a product~~ design, development, manufacture, and inspection, of a product,

wherein the hardware and firmware ~~electronized~~related electronic information components include at least one of a drawing of a hardware constituting the product, a firmware, a program, a specification, and a contract for the product, as the ~~electronized~~electronic information,

wherein said hardware and firmware related electronic information components as a plurality of electronic information generated during the processes including the design, development, manufacture and inspection of the product constitute a hierarchical structure in which the hardware and firmware related electronic information components are stored according to a numbering system common to both hardware and firmware electronic information components and added to each hardware and firmware electronic information component,

wherein said storage unit stores meta-information according to Extensible Markup Language (XML) data expressing the hierarchical structure of the hardware and firmware related electronic information components, and

wherein said hardware and ~~said~~ firmware related electronic information components constituting said product are at a same management level;

a server which manages the hardware and firmware component knowledge ~~data base~~database stored in said storage unit; and

at least one client, which is conn ct d to said server via a network, ~~which~~ and takes out from said storage unit a ~~predetermined~~ desired hardware and firmware related electronic information component from ~~said storage unit via said network~~among said plurality of hardware and firmware related electronic information components constituting the hierarchical structure based on the meta information.

2. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A component management device comprising:

a storage unit storing hardware and firmware related electronic information components as a hardware and firmware component knowledge database, each hardware and firmware related electronic information component being ~~electronized~~electronic information ~~that is~~ generated in processes ~~from~~including design, development, manufacture, and inspection, of a ~~product~~product,

wherein the hardware and firmware related electronic information components include at least one of a drawing of a hardware constituting the product, a firmware, a program, a specification, and a contract constituting the product, as the ~~electronized~~electronic information,

wherein said hardware and firmware related electronic information components as a plurality of electronic information generated during the processes including the design, development, manufacture and inspection of the product constitute a hierarchical structure in which the hardware and firmware related electronic information components are stored according to a numbering system common to both hardware and firmware electronic information components and added to each hardware and firmware electronic information component,

wherein said storage unit stores meta-information according to Extensible Markup Language (XML) data expressing the hierarchical structure of the hardware and firmware related electronic information components, and

wherein said hardware and ~~said~~ firmware related electronic information components constituting said product are at a same management level; and

a management unit managing the hardware and firmware component knowledge ~~data base~~database by controlling when a client takes out a desired hardware and firmware related electronic information component from ~~said storage unit via a network~~among said plurality of hardware and firmware related electronic information components constituting the hierarchical structure based on the meta information.

3. (CANCELLED)

4. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein the meta-information comprises taking-out limiting information related to ~~the~~ permission/non-permission of taking-out for each hardware and firmware related electronic information component, and wherein said client takes out the ~~applicable~~desired hardware and firmware related electronic information component based on the taking-out limiting information only when said client gets ~~the~~ permission.

5. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said hardware and firmware related electronic information component comprises patch information for automatically performing a patch processing ~~to a~~ to an applicable firmware, and wherein said client performs the patch processing to the applicable firmware based on the patch information.

6. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said client retrieves ~~a desired~~the desired hardware and firmware related electronic information component based on ~~the~~ meta-information.

7. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said management unit sends a notice of revision to said client via said network when a hardware and firmware related electronic information component already stored in said storage unit is revised and sends a notice of new registration to said client via said network when a new hardware and firmware related electronic information component is registered in said storage unit, and wherein said client takes out said desired hardware and firmware related electronic information component at an arbitrary timing after said client receives the notice of revision or the notice of new registration.

8. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management device according to claim 2, wherein said management unit conducts communications related to ~~the~~ a development consignment of said product with a development maker side client placed in an external development maker and connected thereto via said network.

9. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A component development data management device comprising:

a storage unit storing hardware and firmware development data, including manufacture and ~~inspection, data~~inspection data, generated to constitute a product, as a component development knowledge database, wherein said hardware and said firmware development data, including the manufacture and the inspection data, constituting said product are at a same management level; and

a management unit managing the component development knowledge database by controlling when a client takes out the hardware and firmware development data, including the manufacture and the inspection data, as component development data from said storage unit via a network, and conducting communications for getting a permission of quotation of a catalog of parts constituting said product based upon the hardware and firmware development data, including the manufacture and the inspection data, with an author side client placed in the author side of the catalog and registering the catalog as a ~~data base~~database in said storage unit when ~~it gets~~the management unit gets the permission.

10. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A computer-readable recording medium ~~for~~ recording a component management program ~~for making~~controlling a computer ~~execute~~according to a process comprising:

storing hardware and firmware related ~~electronized~~electronic information components as a hardware and firmware component knowledge database, each ~~electronized~~hardware and firmware related electronic information component being ~~electronized~~electronic information generated during ~~a product~~processes including design, development, manufacture, and inspection, of a product

wherein the hardware and firmware related electronic information components include at least one of a drawing of a hardware constituting the product, a firmware, a program, a specification, and a contract for the product, as the ~~electronized~~electronic information,

wherein said hardware and firmware related electronic information components as a plurality of electronic information generated during the processes including the design, development, manufacture and inspection of the product constitute a hierarchical structure in which the hardware and firmware related electronic information components are stored according to a numbering system common to both hardware and firmware electronic information components and added to each hardware and firmware electronic information component.

wherein the storing comprises storing meta-information according to Extensible Markup Language (XML) data expressing the hierarchical structure of the hardware and firmware related electronic information components, and

wherein said hardware and ~~said~~ firmware related electronic information components constituting said product are at a same management level; and

managing the component knowledge ~~data base~~database by controlling when a client takes out a desired stored hardware and firmware related electronic information component ~~from said storage unit via a network~~from among said plurality of hardware and firmware related electronic information components constituting the hierarchical structure based on the meta information.

11. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A component knowledge system, comprising:

a programmed computer processor controlling the component knowledge system according to a process comprising:

generating, storing and managing meta information by treating at same management level varyingly managed and related ~~electronized~~electronic information product components that are ~~electronized~~electronic information generated in processes ~~from~~including design, development, manufacture, and inspection, of the product and include at least one of a drawing of a hardware constituting the product, a firmware, a program, a specification, and a contract constituting the product,

wherein said hardware and firmware related electronic information components as a plurality of electronic information generated during the processes including the design, development, manufacture and inspection of the product constitute a hierarchical structure in which the hardware and firmware related electronic information components are stored according to a numbering system common to both hardware and firmware electronic information components and added to each hardware and firmware electronic information component, and

wherein the meta-information is according to Extensible Markup Language (XML) data expressing the hierarchical structure of the hardware and firmware related electronic information components, and

controlling when a client takes out a desired stored hardware and firmware related electronic information component from among said plurality of hardware and firmware related electronic information components constituting the hierarchical structure based on the meta information.

12. (CANCELLED)

13. (CANCELLED)

14. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management system of ~~claim 13~~claim 2, wherein patch information of each firmware ~~electronized~~electronic information component is included as a subclass in the numbering system.

15. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management system of ~~claim 12~~claim 2, wherein the XML data comprises destination information of the hardware and firmware ~~electronized~~related electronic information components.

16. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) The component management system of ~~claim 12~~claim 2, wherein the XML data comprises new and revised design notice information of the hardware and firmware ~~electronized~~related electronic information components.

17. (CANCELLED)